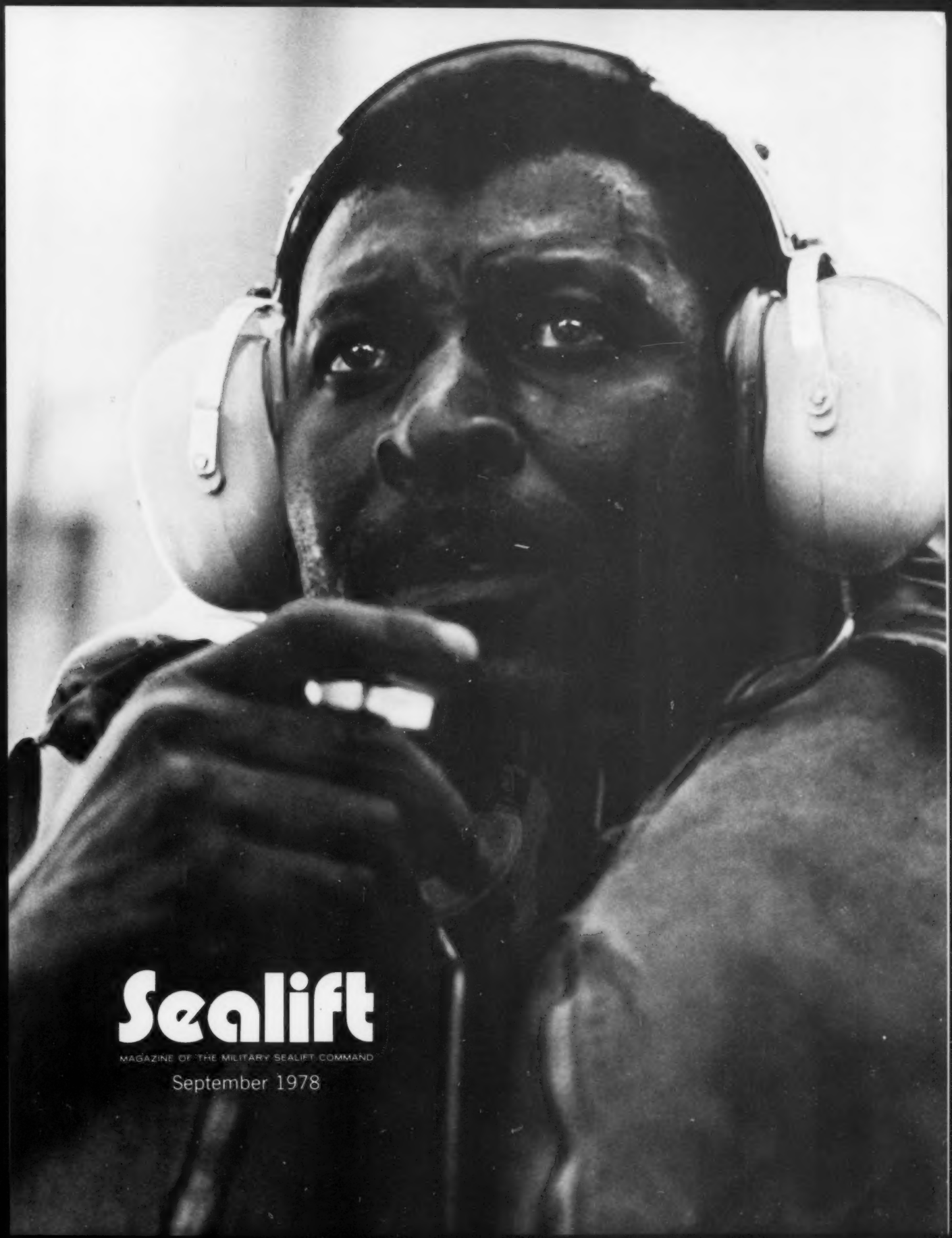


Sealift

MAGAZINE OF THE MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

September 1978

Confidence In Navy Based On Its People

From time to time, in this column, I have made the point that we in Military Sealift Command perform a vital role in support of the Navy in the transportation area, in direct support of fleet units, and in support of Navy ocean research. As a major Navy command it is essential that we thoroughly understand the views and policies of the Chief of Naval Operations. I therefore have chosen this forum to pass on to you the key thoughts expressed by the new CNO, Adm. Thomas B. Hayward.

In a message to all Navy members Admiral Hayward vowed to build a stronger Navy on the foundation for a steady improvement in Navy capabilities which Admiral Holloway developed during his tenure as CNO, that progress being illustrated by the reversal of previously declining trends in fleet readiness.

Admiral Hayward said he planned to "ensure that the U.S. Navy remains second to none and fully capable of discharging its worldwide responsibilities wherever the interests of the country may require.

"Today's Navy," he said, "is equal to that task. Our combatant capabilities have improved markedly in recent years and assure us the capability to prevail over any maritime adversary today.

"However," the new CNO added, "the overall size of the Navy remains a source of concern. Numbers are a key measure of total capability particularly in a world where the Navy is called upon to perform demanding tasks in a number of geographically separated regions simultaneously.

"I regard it as one of my most important responsibilities as CNO to articulate in a forceful and objective way the case for a Navy of the size and capability required to assure the United States the maritime superiority which will be essential for its security in the years ahead.

"My optimism about the state of the Navy today stems not only from its steadily improving capabilities but from its people whose esprit, competence and potential I have witnessed first hand during the past three years with the Pacific Fleet."

People, he said, "are the single most important reason for my absolute confidence in the Navy's ability to discharge its responsibilities."

The new CNO—our boss—also set forth a number of goals he planned to pursue, and indicated that he would provide more detailed guidelines concerning those goals in the near future.

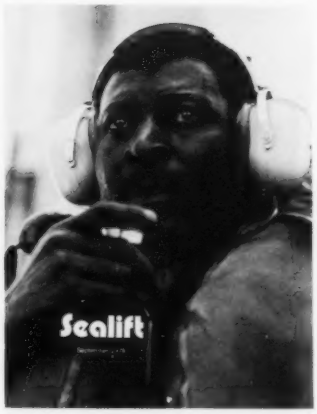
Among the objectives he listed which should guide Navy efforts, including those of MSC, were retention of skilled people, improving the quality of leadership accelerating progress in the area of tactical proficiency, and making certain that the best people are on the right job equipped with the tools and authority they need to fulfill their missions.

Other objectives set forth by Admiral Hayward include attaining an effective balance between resources available and responsibilities assigned Navy units, stabilizing fleet operating schedules, reducing administrative workloads, strengthening the chain of command and improving the quality of shipboard life, with emphasis on habitability improvements.

Of special interest to the CNO is communication and he vowed to do all that he could to strengthen internal communication—among Navy members and employees—while at the same time helping develop full public understanding of the Navy as a "ready, highly capable combatant force, equal to any task which might be levied on it, effectively led at all levels of the organization, and superbly served by the thousands of dedicated Navy men and women who operate and maintain its ships, aircraft and support establishment."

Those words apply to MSC people and we will do our part to assure the attainment of the objectives Admiral Hayward has established for the entire Navy team.

Commander, Military Sealift Command



COVER: This phone talker aboard the USNS Passumpsic is among a growing number of blacks carving out a maritime career with MSC. Story on page 13.

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Sealift

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A jeep comes off the Comet in an earlier Reforger exercise. Comet is a three-year Reforger veteran.

Four MSC Vessels In NATO Exercises

U.S. Marines, Army and Air Force fighting units are now massed in West Germany to again illustrate that United States armed forces can reinforce NATO military commands in case of a war in Europe, or a similar military emergency.

The Navy's Military Sealift Command provided four ships to transport Marine and Army equipment to Europe and will return the equipment when the exercises are completed.

Approximately 13,000 Army troops and 9,000 Marines make up the bulk of the ground forces of the two major NATO exercises now taking place.

This is the first year MSC has been

involved in Marine Corps NATO exercises. In the past, Marines and their equipment were transported by naval amphibious ships. This year all but about 300 Marines were carried to Germany by amphibious ships. The remainder were flown to Europe by Military Airlift Command.

Marines of the 4th Marine Amphibious Brigade and the 2nd Marine Air Wing are involved in month-long Bold Guard maneuvers in the northern Schleswig-Holstein area of West Germany. Marine equipment including tanks, trucks and jeeps was transported aboard the MSC roll-on, roll-off ship Meteor and the MSC chartered breakbulk ship Pioneer Commander. Meteor is a Civil Service manned vessel while the Commander is operated for MSC by U.S. Lines.

In addition to Marine Corps pallets, Meteor carried 585 vehicles. The Commander transported 345 vehicles, the remainder of 200 pallets and 40 twenty-foot containers full of Marine Corps equipment.

The ships sailed from Morehead City, N.C. on August 23 and completed unloading at Brunsbuttel, Germany, September 5. They are scheduled to return the material to Morehead City about October 6.

Army equipment was loaded at Beaumont, Texas aboard the roll-on, roll-off ships Comet and Callaghan, both three-year veterans of the Reforger portion of the NATO exercises.

Reforger and another exercise, Crested Cap, are joint service strategic mobility exercises to lift combat and support units from the United States to Europe and return. In addition to enhancing military readiness, the exercises demonstrate the continuing resolve and capability of the United States to reinforce NATO in contingencies.

Reforger and Crested Cap troops are participating in ground and air training in the NATO Autumn Forge series of exercises that range from Norway through Central Europe to Turkey.

Main purposes of Autumn Forge series are to demonstrate the Allied Command Europe solidarity and preparedness for defense of Western Europe, to improve management procedures, to develop readiness to respond to any threat by Warsaw Pact Nations (European Communist countries) and to resolve potential problems in procedures and logistical support.

Major units involved in Reforger include the 5th Infantry Division from Fort Polk, La.; a brigade of the 4th Mechanized Infantry Division from Fort Carson, Colo.; an attack helicopter battalion and an air cavalry troop from Fort Campbell, Ky.; a Hawk missile battalion from Fort Bliss, Texas; elements of the 9th Infantry Division from Fort Lewis, Wash., and several smaller units

Callaghan transported 134 aircraft and 373 vehicles to Ghent, Belgium.

Pioneer Commander, operated by U.S. Lines for MSC, transported Marine Corps equipment to Germany.

including part of the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve.

Crested Cap is the name assigned deployment of 48 Air Force F-4 Phantom fighter-bombers of the 4th Tactical Fighter Wing from Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C. to Ramstein Air Base in West Germany. The aircraft were refueled under way by Air Force Strategic Air Command stratotankers.

Reforger is a realistic test of U.S. capability to transport equipment and troops by a combination of sealift and airlift and to rapidly reinforce troops in Central Europe.

The Army's Military Traffic Management Command managed the move of approximately 37,000 measurement tons of equipment to Beaumont where it was loaded aboard Comet and Callaghan, both MSC ships.

Comet delivered more than 300 vehicles and 200 trailers to Rotterdam and Callaghan transported 134 aircraft and 373 vehicles to Ghent.

After sailing from Beaumont and Morehead City the four MSC controlled ships were formed into a wartime convoy and protected by

ships of several NATO nations including the United States. Ships of the U.S. 2nd Fleet also joined the convoy as part of the naval exercise Northern Wedding which was held in the North Atlantic.

While in the Western Atlantic, the convoy was attacked by "enemy" submarines and surface ships and in the Eastern Atlantic the attacking forces including jet aircraft.

An important part of Reforger is the use by deployed units of considerable equipment and material already prepositioned in Europe. The material is stockpiled for immediate use should reinforcement of Europe be necessary.

Fourteen naval reservists from various convoy commodore, Naval Control of Shipping Organization (NCSORG) units and a fleet ocean tug unit will be aboard the four ships for their active duty training.

Convoy commodore members include Lt. Cmdr. Bruce N. Hatton, of Alexandria, Va.; Lt. Thomas G. Faulkner, of Greenville, S.C.; Lt. Arthur Milbrath, Gaithersburg, Md.; Lt. David Eckstrom, Columbia, S.C.; SM2 Kenneth Locke, Anderson, S.C.; SM3 Bobby Birdsong, Raleigh, N.C.; SM3 Victor Lanahan, Greenville, S.C.; SM3 Michael Bouslog, Arnold, Md., and SM3 Gregory Richards, North Hollywood, Calif.

Reserves from NCSORG units are SM1 Donald Loveday, New Rochelle, N.Y. and SMSN Oliver Henderson, College Park, Ga. From Fleet Tug 162 is SM1 Stuart Nolan, Altoona, Pa. ⚓

The roll-on, roll-off vessel Meteor heads for Beaumont.

Black Mariners— Many Contributions, Little Recognition

By Paul B. Woodall

Illustration by Art Mullins

Matthew Henson
Polar Explorer

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Negro has played a significant role in American history and in the growth of the U.S. Navy and merchant marine. Yet the achievements of black naval and maritime personnel have often been excluded or ignored. This is the second article of a two-part series that began in August and reviews the lives of some outstanding blacks in naval or maritime history, beginning with the Revolutionary War.

During the Civil War blacks served as gunners, coal passers, stewards, firemen, and loaders. In the Union Navy, one of four sailors was black, and blacks suffered about one-fourth of the Navy's casualties.

When the Spanish-American War broke out, blacks were serving regularly in the Navy. They were enthusiastic to demonstrate their dedication to their country. Twenty-two blacks perished in Havana Harbor on Feb. 15, 1898 when the battleship Maine was mysteriously sunk.

With the Plessy vs. Ferguson decision, a "separate but equal rights" for blacks policy was established in the second half of the 19th century. Historians look upon this as the turning point for blacks in all walks of life, including the military. Segregation became more entrenched. But, black progress could not be stopped.

In 1909, black explorer Matthew Henson accompanied explorer Adm. Robert E. Peary to the North Pole, and the National Assn. for the Advancement of Colored People was founded.

Henson was born in Maryland, moved to Washington, D.C., attended school in Georgetown, went to sea at 12 (lying about his age). He was selling hats on Pennsylvania Avenue at the time Peary signed him on.

Their 23 years together covered seven expeditions, and, although Henson was listed as Peary's valet, they were constant, almost inseparable friends.

It is possible that Peary may have been unwilling to share the discovery of the North Pole with Henson who did not press his own claims, but Peary did respond to public opinion which criticized him for taking a black man along as his only non-Eskimo companion.

Peary explained his reasons: "Henson was the best man I had with me for this kind of work, with the exception of the Eskimos.

"Henson, with his years of Arctic experience, was almost as skillful at his work as an Eskimo. He could handle dogs and sledges. He was a part of the traveling machine. Had I taken another member of the expedition also, he would have been a passenger, necessitating the carrying of extra rations and other impedimentia.

"The second reason was that while Henson was more useful to me than any other member of my expedition, when it came to traveling with my last party over the polar ice, he would not have been as competent as the white members of the expedition in getting himself and his party back to the land.

"While faithful to me and when with me more effective in covering distance with a sledge than any of the

others, he had not, as a racial inheritance, the daring and initiative of Bartlett or Marvin, MacMillan or Borcup. I owed it to him not to subject him to dangers and responsibilities with which he was temperamentally unfit to face."

This second reason is seemingly unconvincing considering that Henson reached the Pole 45 minutes before Peary who suffered from frozen feet. Perhaps Peary was trying to appease the bigots who were criticizing him for choosing Henson over a white man. According to an account written by one of the men in Peary's expedition, Henson was the most popular man aboard ship with the Eskimos. "He could talk their language like a native. He made all the sledges that went to the Pole. He made all the stores. Henson, the black man, went to the Pole because he was a better man than any of his white assistants."

Matthew Henson died in 1955, and in 1961 a plaque was unveiled in the State House at Annapolis, Md., which reads in part:

MATTHEW A. HENSON
CO-DISCOVERER OF THE NORTH POLE
WITH
ADMIRAL ROBERT E. PEARY
APRIL 6, 1909

During World War I there were 10,000 blacks serving in the Navy, but they were restricted to the messman's branch. Following lynchings and race riots in the southern and mid-western states, blacks in and out of uniform found it difficult to maintain a sense of loyalty or optimism in the early months of the war.

The Navy had never commissioned any black officers, and blacks were restricted from joining the Marine Corps. After the war, the service was reduced to a small peacekeeping force, and blacks were allowed to enlist as stewards, although some were allowed to fill jobs on supply vessels.

Hugh N. Mulzac was the first known black sea captain of the 20th century American Navy. A man of high purpose and deep convictions, he had the first fully integrated crew, half white and half black, and his was the first Navy crew in which sailors were ranked according to ability and experience rather than by color.

Born in the West Indies, he signed aboard his first ship as a teenager to see the world and learn the art of navigation. Leaving the sea briefly, he studied navigation and seamanship at Swansea Nautical College in South Wales.

Within five years Mulzac was granted a license as a second mate for sailing and steam ships. He then took up residence in the United States and applied for citizenship.

In 1920 Mulzac passed the examination for a master's license, but due to the widespread prejudice in those years he was rarely given a command. For 22 years he made 15 trips around the world, usually as mate, wireless operator, navigator and once as a cook.

With the advent of World War II, bias gave way to the country's pressing needs, and in 1942 Mulzac was at last given command of a ship.

He guided his ship through 19 Atlantic crossings, through submarine-infested waters, ferrying more than 18,000 soldiers and prisoners and tons of material without the loss of a single life.

One of the most outstanding black heros of World War II was Navy

Vice Adm. Samuel Gravely was the first black officer to be promoted to flag rank.

USS Miller is the most recent ship to be named after a black naval hero.

Dorie Miller, wearing the Navy Cross, was one of the heroes of World War II. He died in the South Pacific in 1943.

mess attendant Dorie Miller who was awarded the Navy Cross for his performance aboard the battleship USS Virginia during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

After moving his commanding officer to safety, Miller manned a machine gun and directed his fire at enemy aircraft until he was ordered to leave the bridge.

In addition to the Navy Cross, Miller was awarded the Purple Heart, the American Defense Medal, the World War II Victory Medal and the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal.

Miller was killed when the USS Liscomb Bay was sunk in the South Pacific on Nov. 24, 1943.

On June 30, 1973 a destroyer escort was christened the USS Miller after the black Navy hero. It was only the third Navy ship ever to be named after a black Navy man. The others were the USS Leonard R. Harmon (now decommissioned) and the USS Jesse L. Brown.

In 1943 there were 19 black Navy Seabee units, totalling some 18,600 men, engaged in building port facilities and coastal defenses. But the war years were not free from racial strife, and the Navy had to confront disturbances in Port Chicago, Camp Rousseau, Guam, and, in one case, involving the 80th Seabee Battalion.

Dissent usually centered around

USS Harmon was the first Navy ship to be named after a black Navy man.

their being restricted to non-combat roles, and it was not until after America's entry into the war that the black soldier was integrated into white units. Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal revised this policy and issued a Guide To The Command Of Negro Naval Personnel which contained the following guidelines.

"The Navy accepts no theories of racial differences in inborn ability, but expects that every man wearing his uniform be trained and used in accordance with his maximum individual abilities."

This new policy represented a major breakthrough for blacks in the Navy. By 1944, the Navy had commissioned two chaplains, three medical officers, two dentists, three supply officers, two civil engineers and one warrant officer upon their graduation from the Great Lakes Naval Training Center.

By the middle of 1944 the Navy had closed its segregated advanced-training facilities and followed up by organizing 25 auxiliary ships manned by 10 per cent blacks. By October the WAVES had begun accepting black women officers and enlisted personnel, and by early 1945 basic training was racially integrated.

After the war, advancement of policies toward truly integrated armed forces continued, and on July 26, 1948, Executive Order 9981 was signed which required equal opportunity in the services regardless of race.

The President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in The Armed Services was established to ensure implementation of the order and to reach a compatible agreement aligning integration policy with universal policy.

While the number of officers increased from four to 17 between 1949 and 1950, the number of applicants for entrance into those ranks proved disappointing.

James Conyers of Columbia, S.C., on Sept. 24, 1872, was the first black appointed to the U.S. Naval Academy, but he did not complete his studies and resigned in 1873. In 1949 Wesley A. Brown became the first black to successfully complete the academy course.

Throughout the 1950s racial barriers continued to fall as emphasis was placed on equal opportunity for all. In the years between 1964 and 1968 the passage of the civil rights acts and other laws and executive orders established federal desegregation policies, each having a positive effect on equal opportunity in the military services.

One example is the Navy's Manual on Equal Opportunity and Treatment of Military Personnel which was issued in 1965. The Navy also initiated programs to help identify men and women of disadvantaged cultural backgrounds.

With the publication of the Defense Department Human Goals Charter in 1970, the Navy began an aggressive campaign to train personnel in race relations.

The Chief of Naval Relations later approved the charter of Race Relations and Equal Opportunity which set forth specific goals and objectives and said that henceforth there would be no *White* Navy, nor *Black* Navy, but "One Navy."

In today's Navy there is a continuing effort to ensure full participation of black men and women and other

Capt. Gerald Thomas was the second black officer to be elevated to the rank of rear admiral.

minorities in the Navy's many officer and enlisted programs. Most ships, stations and squadrons have Human Relations Councils whose members assist the commanding officer in seeking solutions to human relations problems, as well as promoting equal opportunity. Each command has access to local human resource centers which provide assistance and guidance in human resource management, and similar advice and assistance are available throughout the Navy under the aegis of the fleet commanders in chief.

Command attention to equal opportunity and equitable treatment of all personnel is a matter of policy and good management practice.

By 1976 two of the Navy's admirals and 5 per cent of the senior petty officers were black. The minority composition of the Navy had increased threefold in the previous decade.

In 1972, Capt. Samuel L. Gravely, Jr. was the first black officer to be promoted to flag rank, and in 1974 Capt. Gerald Eustis Thomas was the second black line officer to be nominated to the rank of rear admiral.

Now a vice admiral, Gravely is director of the Defense Communications Agency, Washington, D.C. Rear Admiral Thomas is director of Near Eastern, African and South Asian affairs for the assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs.

Their attainment of high rank is an example of the opportunities available to the minority groups in today's Navy. Seamen, black or white, have come a long way since the days when William E. Powell had indignantly protested the treatment afforded seamen more than a century ago.

In today's Navy, the number of high ranking black officers is increasing. The fourth black officer recently was selected by the Navy for flag rank and 22 other black officers are filling billets of command or executive officer in ships, squadrons, and shore activities.

Secretary of the Navy W. Graham Claytor, Jr. has emphasized the importance of equal opportunities for blacks in the Navy. "I am proud of the progress already made, but not satisfied that it is anything like as good as we can and should achieve," he said. ⚓

John Powell

MSC Blacks Recall Struggles, Victories

By Louis Panarale

They are masters of ships, engineers, deck officers, chief stewards and pursers. They work as oilers, wipers, messmen and able bodied seamen. They head divisions and offices ashore.

No stereotype fits, for they are individuals with unique talents and differing personalities. The two things they have in common are that they are black and work for MSC.

They believe that opportunities for minorities have improved and will continue to do so, especially in MSC. That's why most plan to make a career with the command.

Gus Horn was in his teens when he decided there were not many career opportunities for young blacks growing up in Kansas. He dropped out of high school a few months short of graduation and headed for California.

"When I got to San Diego I joined the Navy and that was the first time I had ever seen the ocean," said Horn who is one of two black captains of MSC ships.

Horn commands the oceanographic survey ship Silas Bent and works for MSC, Pacific. "I've sailed passenger ships, tankers, cargo vessels, scientific support ships and everything else, except maybe tugs and cable ships," said Horn in listing the kinds of ships he has served on during 25 years with MSC.

Horn feels life at sea is a serious business that requires maturity among those who sail. "But, I must say I was no angel when I first started out in the Navy. Sometimes I think I spent about as much time in the brig as I did out of it," he said.

Horn was 18 when he joined the Navy and admits that at first he lacked maturity. But he learned.

"I think the qualities a young man must have to make a success of a seagoing career are common sense, desire and staying power, regardless of what color he is," he said.

"I would like to see young men who think a sea career is

Taluga Captain Gill (right) poses with Length of Service Award recipients Juan Aranas (25 years), William Kepoo (30 years) and Jose Manilisay (35 years).

in their future give MSC a try. I really feel the opportunities are here. And it doesn't matter whether the man is black, white, blue or green so long as he comes aboard to do a job.

"As a general rule, everyone aboard a ship is color blind. We all work together. It is a very small community and if a guy can't get along with his shipmates he has no business being out there."

Horn believes the Navy offers far more opportunities for blacks than it did when he joined in 1946. "I was the only black seaman aboard my first ship," he recalled.

"Blacks have made great strides since I was in the Navy but I think it will take more time for them to make their presence felt in the merchant marine," he said.

"MSC is doing a good recruiting job. Aboard my own ship I have about five young blacks. To have five young men of any color aboard a ship is a novelty in itself," he said.

"One unfortunate thing is that when opportunities do come up blacks are not always around to take advantage of them. But I think we are going to see more black officers in MSC."

Horn said that prospects for blacks were not nearly as good when he first applied for a job with MSC around 1953. "The recruiter told me I could work in the steward department. I told him I wanted a deck job, turned in my application and left. A couple of months later I was accepted as an able bodied seaman."

"That goes to show you what you can accomplish if you stick to your own plans and not somebody else's," Horn said.

Horn says he would not dissuade a young black from taking a job in the steward's department. "As other jobs become available he can make the change," he said. "That was more difficult to do when I was a young seaman."

Horn noted other improvements. "I continued my own education by taking technical courses but I had to do it on my own. Today MSC offers programs to seamen who have the potential of becoming officers," he said. "But, even with greater educational opportunity, there is still a certain amount of sacrifice involved in going to school. Not everyone is willing to hack it," he said.

Leroy Gill understands that. "I saved all my leave time for schooling periods," said Gill, a black who is master of the MSC, Pacific oiler USNS Taluga.

Gill said Equal Employment Opportunity programs benefit all minorities but in themselves do not assure success. "It's up to the individual as to how far he wants to go. If he wants to get ahead and he sets his mind to it, he can attain almost any goal. If he sits around and watches the rest of the world go by, he won't accomplish much."

Gill grew up in Los Angeles. As a boy he often went to the shipyards to watch his father work as a welder. Sometimes, when a ship was completed, the families of the shipyard workers were invited to go aboard for a shakedown cruise.

"I guess something stuck in my mind about those cruises. I had three brothers who served in the Army. I picked the Navy."

When he got out in 1960 he joined the Los Angeles Police Department, and tried other jobs before deciding to go back to sea. In 1964, Gill joined MSC as an able bodied seaman.

Two years later he obtained his third mate's license. He

continued his studies and by 1970 he earned his second mate's license. Two years later he made chief mate and in 1974 he qualified for a master's license.

"I had little time for recreation, but I have no regrets. MSC has been very good to me. I put in a lot of hard work and I have been repaid for it," he said.

Gill believes the Navy is the best place for a black to start a seagoing career. "A sailor has the opportunity to see merchant ships and to talk with merchant mariners. He can broaden his horizons, improve his education and when he gets out he can think about the merchant marine as a career."

Navy men are more familiar with MSC than they were in the past, Gill believes. He said the growing number of MSC-manned fleet support ships helps familiarize many blue jackets with MSC.

"They see MSC ships come alongside for underway replenishments. They see the job MSC does and they think about working for MSC as Civil Service mariners after they conclude their military careers," Gill explained.

Gill ranks MSC high for the way it has conducted its equal employment opportunities program. "The EEO director has to report directly to the admiral or the captain or whoever is in charge of a command. I know that is how things work at MSC, Pacific," Gill said.

Being black has not caused Captain Gill any problems. "As long as a master is firm and fair in the way he deals with people he is going to have very few problems. I just finished my tour on the Taluga and I had only three disciplinary actions in that period," Gill said.

"Every master of a ship builds up a reputation. So when men go aboard a ship they pretty much know what that master expects of them."

Gill said that one of his most satisfying experiences with MSC was helping devise a system for saving cargo fuel normally flushed out of hoses following an underway replenishment by an MSC oiler.

Gill and Dennis Wyatt recommended flushing excess fuel into settling tanks. The fuel rises to the top of the tanks and salt water is drained through valves at the bottom. The salt water gets in the hoses when they are hauled back aboard an oiler.

MSC has saved thousands of barrels of oil since 1975 when his and Wyatt's idea was first used on the Passumpsic and later on Taluga, Mispillion and Navasota, Gill said.

"I've never bowed down to anyone," said Ben Hicks the purser of the MSC, Atlantic oiler USNS Neosho. "I have always managed to handle the situation before the situation handled me."

Hicks was referring to the difficult times he faced as a black growing up during the depression, in the military and while working as a merchant seaman. "When you come off the streets the way I did, survival becomes second nature," said Hicks who was born in Miami and as a youth worked for the Civilian Conservation Corps.

At the outbreak of World War II, Hicks volunteered for the Army. He went to officer's training school before he completed his high school education in the Army and eventually became a first lieutenant.

"I encountered a lot of prejudice in Officer's Candidate School. There was strict segregation in those days. It was rare when a black ever made the rank of major or colonel, and when he did he really stood out from the crowd."

He was a liaison officer during the peace talks in Korea between United Nations forces and the North Koreans and a security officer for U.S. embassy officials there.

"I went into business for myself after I got out of the Army and then in 1956 I joined MSC," Hicks said. "When I first started with MSC there was little opportunity for blacks to work in the deck department."

Hicks started in the steward department aboard the troop transport USNS Darby. After a few months he was transferred to the deck department. He sailed once as a chief steward but did not care for that position.

"Then it dawned on me that I knew about supply work from my Army days. And I knew how to type. So I applied for a position as storekeeper and got it. I stayed with that work so that I could work my way up to purser," Hicks said.

"I could have retired about a year ago but I am still hanging in. I've met some outstanding people in this outfit and I am proud to have known them."

"I always advise young people with abilities to give a maritime career a chance. I am not just speaking about blacks or other minorities. I encourage all those who look like they have what it takes to make it."

George Irvin Smith came close to ending his seagoing career after his first voyage as a messman aboard a troop transport during World War II.

"We were shot at by a surfaced Japanese submarine

George I. Smith

YNC Walter Williams

near Kodiak, Alaska. When my ship docked in Seattle I got off and enlisted in the Coast Guard. I didn't like the idea of being shot at without being able to shoot back," said Smith.

Smith likes to be known by his nickname, G.I. Smith, a name everybody is familiar with in MSC, Pacific where he is port steward.

Smith's father had been a seaman and worked as a cook for a few years but decided not to make the merchant marine a career. Smith recalled that in the days his father sailed, there was virtually no chance for a black to advance to better jobs.

"In 1942, I started out as a messman aboard a troop transport, working for the Army Transport Service. In two weeks I was promoted to third cook," Smith said.

"I was in the Coast Guard for less than four years and I was in one of the first groups of blacks to go through the Coast Guard boot camp," Smith recalled.

"The boot camps were segregated in those days but we were not segregated aboard ships. I guess in that respect the Coast Guard was a little bit ahead of the other services."

While in the Coast Guard, Smith learned to type, went to radio school and made radioman second class before he was discharged.

"I remember some really bad times, after the war when I tried to get a job back with the Army Transport Service. There was a lot of paying under the table to get jobs," Smith said.

Smith recalled that he had more ups and downs through the 1950s, including while he was with MSC. "But I must say that if there was any time I have been treated unfairly as a black while with MSC it was because of the actions of some individuals," Smith said.

"I always had someone speak up for me, especially in the supply division. Now, with an Equal Opportunity office, there is someone whose job it is to look into these problems."

Smith recalled the time he was promoted from assistant storekeeper to storekeeper on a moment's notice when an emergency came up and the regular storekeeper could not handle the situation.

Smith said he made promotions several times simply because he proved he was needed. He held his position as storekeeper until 1963 and then was promoted to chief steward.

John J. Powell heads ship's liaison and port steward division of the MSC, Atlantic supply office. His division runs a training program for yeomen storekeepers and steward personnel.

Powell started with MSC, Atlantic in 1954 as a utility man aboard USNS Patch. Less than 2½ years later, he was chief steward of USNS Boyce. He came ashore in 1972 to take his present position.

"When I was chief steward aboard MSC ships I was proud of the work I did," Powell said. "A lot of people don't understand what stewardship is all about. But to me, rendering a service has always been a part of my life."

Powell has a masters degree in student personnel administration. In college he worked as a porter, bellhop and waiter, later becoming a social worker in New York City.

Powell feels no job is demeaning as long as the

individual maintains his own dignity. "When I was steward aboard ships, the jobs did not always glorify me but I glorified the jobs," he said.

Powell was a social worker when he signed on as a utility man. "I didn't go to sea with the idea that I was taking some kind of demotion. I went to sea to learn and with the feeling that if there were opportunities, then I wasn't going to sit around. I may not have made history but I am proud of what I accomplished," he said.

Powell said that he never asked anyone to give him a hand because he was black. "I have always had to scuffle for everything I got and I did it all on merit," Powell said.

"My philosophy to this day is that if you want something badly enough and you have the tenacity and intestinal fortitude to stick it out, you can accomplish things."

Powell was born in New York, was orphaned and later grew up in the South under the care of this grandmother. "She had a lot of pride that she instilled in me. She was a strict disciplinarian and when she told me to jump, I would jump twice. I am really grateful to her for being such a hard taskmaster," he said.

Powell recalled how he was segregated from whites when he was in the Army. "It was a way of life in those days and I accepted it only to preserve my sanity."

"My life at sea gave me the means to raise a family. I was proud to see my daughter become an accomplished musician and teacher. If I were to die today, the world will not owe me a thing."

Powell said he knows many blacks who started out in the merchant marine as wipers and messmen who now sail as chief and first assistant engineers.

"Those guys didn't sit around on their tails. They didn't goof off aboard ship and watch movies. They burned a little midnight oil, they studied and it paid off."

Powell feels a black should not give up in reaching his goals because he encounters prejudice. "You are going to find bigotry anywhere you go in life," he said.

"As far as equal opportunities for minorities in MSC, I think it rates among the best," Powell said.

YNC Walter Williams said that when he completes his career as an enlisted man in the Navy he is interested in working for MSC as a civilian.

In early 1978 Williams was assigned to MSC, Pacific as administrative assistant to the assistant chief of staff for Administration and Manpower.

"I joined the Navy because I had the urge to travel," Williams said. "I had a couple of cousins in the Navy and they had told me about the places they had visited."

Williams has been in the Navy for 18 years and for the last ten years he has been a legal yeoman. "There are definitely good opportunities for blacks in the Navy," Williams said.

"I don't particularly like working ashore but it's all part of the job," said Williams who added that he doesn't have any preference as to what kind of ship he would like to serve on with MSC.

"When I retire as an enlisted man, I am going to take a good look at what MSC has to offer. I have seen other retired Navy men come to MSC and do very well," said Williams.

"Captain Gill of the Taluga is an outstanding example. A black can look to Captain Gill and say, 'Hey, it can be done and I want to do it,'" he said.

"I have a cousin in the Navy who wants to start a seagoing career after he completes his active duty in a couple of years. I have talked to him several times about MSC and he is very interested."

Williams said he has talked to several other Navy men, both black and white, who were interested in what MSC might have to offer them as a career. "These were people whom I know have done a good job in the Navy," he said.

"I am surprised there aren't more blacks coming to work for MSC. I think MSC rates high as an equal opportunity employer and there is always going to be a certain amount of turnover in seagoing jobs." ⚓

USNS Towle Takes Scouts To Land of Midnight Sun

While most persons head for the beaches or mountains for summer fun and recreation, 18 Boy Scouts and Sea Explorers spent their vacation exploring glaciers and braving icebergs and snowblindness in a land few people ever see.

The Scouts and Explorers embarked on the MSC cargo ship USNS Towle in July for a 35-day voyage from Bayonne, N.J. to Thule and Sondrestrom, Greenland, both sites of U.S. military installations above the Arctic Circle.

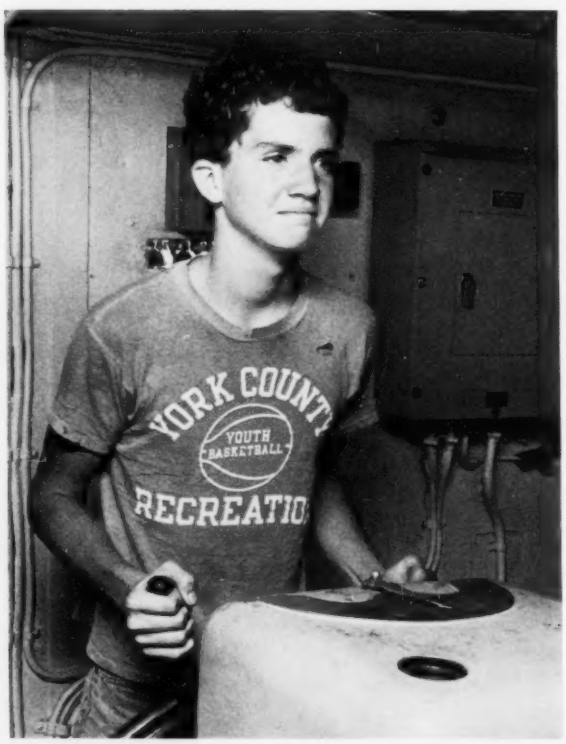
During their 13 days at sea, the Scouts learned about shipboard life. They worked with the Civil Service mariners who operate the ship, each taking turns at working on deck, the bridge, in the galley and engine room.

Towle delivered general cargo, ammunition, vehicles, aviation fuel, a 50-ton landing craft and a tug boat.

Sea Scout cruises aboard the Towle are made possible through a Navy program and the cooperation of the Navy's Military Sealift Command, the Navy Recruiting Command, Naval Education and Training, and the Boy Scouts of America.

Through the Navy program, outstanding Scouts and Explorers throughout the United States are given the opportunity to sail aboard Navy ships, including vessels such as the Towle that resupplies military bases in the Arctic.

A father-son team made up part of the passenger list aboard the Towle. The 19th guest was Joseph Grindrod, of Richboro, Pa., adult leader, whose son Eric was one of the 18 teenagers.



Barry Spady takes his turn at the wheel.

"I'm very excited about the trip," said the senior Grindrod, a physical education teacher at an intermediate school. "I've never been there and I don't know anyone who has traveled to Greenland, especially on a ship.

"I think a lot of people have flown over it. They might have landed on it by plane, but I think very few have actually sailed up the Davis Strait," he remarked prior to sailing.

Eric was equally interested in the cruise. "I figure it will be a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I'm planning to major in geology in college. I have heard there are some fossil fields up there and I hope to be able to see them. This is really going to be a good experience."

One Scout, William Bratton of Cleveland, Ohio, may some day be sailing aboard the Towle as a professional mariner.

Bratton already holds ordinary seaman's papers and "I hope to gain experience and time towards my able seaman document," he said. "I'm also looking forward to hiking in Greenland."

Dan Reed is another Scout with more than passing interest in the sea. Living in Brooklyn, Mich., only 50 miles from Lake Erie, Reed said, "I've seen a lot of ships on the Great Lakes, but I've never ridden one. I'm very interested in the sea and ships.

"I'll be going where few people have been," he said. "I'm looking forward to learning about navigation, communications, forestry, and conservation."

Eagle Scout Leslie Gus Blackwell of Forest, Miss. was as enthusiastic about the trip as anybody could expect to be.

"I'm looking forward to long, hard hours, standing watch in the Land of the Midnight Sun, seeing everything and doing everything," said Black-

Leslie Blackwell gets a rude awakening from his wolfhound friend, pet of the ship's master.

well. "You name it and I want to see it."

A high school graduate with highest honors, Blackwell was an elected official at the 1977 Mississippi Boy's State Convention.

Glenn M. Douglas of Moundsville, W.Va. plans to major in biology in college. "What I'm looking forward to on this trip is a chance to study's Greenland's biology since I'm a science buff.

"The cruise is a challenge which not too many people have been able to participate in," said Douglas.

Perhaps James Reilly of Edgewater, N.J. summed up the attitude of the Scouts as they boarded the Towle in Bayonne.

"I want to learn and work at the same time, and see how the people of Greenland live," he said.

Other Scouts who participated in the 1978 summer resupply cruise include Tommy LoBue of Fort Lee, N.J.; William Dempsey and Frank Barker, both of Feeding Hill, Mass.; Jerald Horowitz and David Malakoff of Brooklyn, N.Y.; William Lenker of Greensboro, N.C.; Robert Turk, Snyder, Texas; William Bowers, Jr. and Russell Keat, York, Pa.; Bill Greenhawk, Woolford, Md.; Barry Spady, Grafton, Va., and Charles Mosier, Findlay, Ohio. ⚓

Sea Explorer Tommy LoBue studies the Atlantic enroute to Greenland.

Rigel's Stewart Nominated For Sailor of the Year

Electronics Technician 1st Class Jerry W. Stewart, a member of the USNS Rigel's military department, has been selected as Military Sealift Command, Atlantic's sailor of the year and was one of eight Navy nominees for Atlantic Fleet sailor of the year.

A man for all seasons, ET1 Stewart, a 33-year-old native of Columbia, S.C., is interested in music, auto mechanics, fishing, gardening, wildlife and, of course, electronics.

Stewart has been aboard Rigel since last October and has spent most of his 14-year Navy career at sea or in remote overseas posts such as the Naval Communications Stations in Morocco and Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. He has served aboard the repair ship USS Cadmus, the oiler Nantahaia and the patrol combatant ship Grand Rapids.

While aboard the Grand Rapids he was cited for his part in the winning of four efficiency awards in 1976.

This year, Vice Adm. Donald D. Engen, deputy commander of the Atlantic Fleet, commended Stewart on behalf of the Atlantic Fleet commander noting that "he has a record of sustained leadership which has been a source of inspiration to his juniors and gratification to his seniors.

"He has consistently demonstrated superior professional expertise and technical proficiency during his total length of naval service," Admiral Engen said. "He has displayed exceptional skill and resourcefulness during his tours both at sea and ashore."

In nominating Stewart, Lt. Comdr. J.J. Lamb officer in charge of Rigel's military department, said Stewart "displayed a remarkable flexibility and learning capacity and true leadership in getting members of other rates and professions to work harmoniously with him."

Stewart was cited in being a leader in the team effort which was able to provide the ship with a closed circuit taped television system and locally produced programming.

The MSC, Atlantic sailor of the year is typical of the small group of military personnel assigned to MSC who work aboard fleet support ships. Working with civilian crews aboard those ships, they are simultaneously representatives of the Navy for the Civil Service employees they work with and important members of the ships' crews. Duties they perform aboard MSC manned fleet support ships are demanding since each Navy man is generally the only one aboard in that rate—and often doubles in brass, performing several different types of tasks. ⚓

ET1 Jerry W. Stewart
Sailor of the Year

A Tahiti ketch with its main sail furled sails off the Bermuda islands.

Bermuda— An Underwater Garden

Photos by Vincent Cavaleri

The sun over Bermuda silhouettes Dr. Robert Kennedy, oceanographer.

The waters off Bermuda provide divers with some of the most spectacular underwater scenes in the Atlantic Ocean. Made up of nearly 200 coral islands and islets, the peaks of extinct volcanoes, Bermuda is encircled on three sides by submerged coral reefs that attract colorful fish and other marine life, as well as oceanographers and tourist divers.

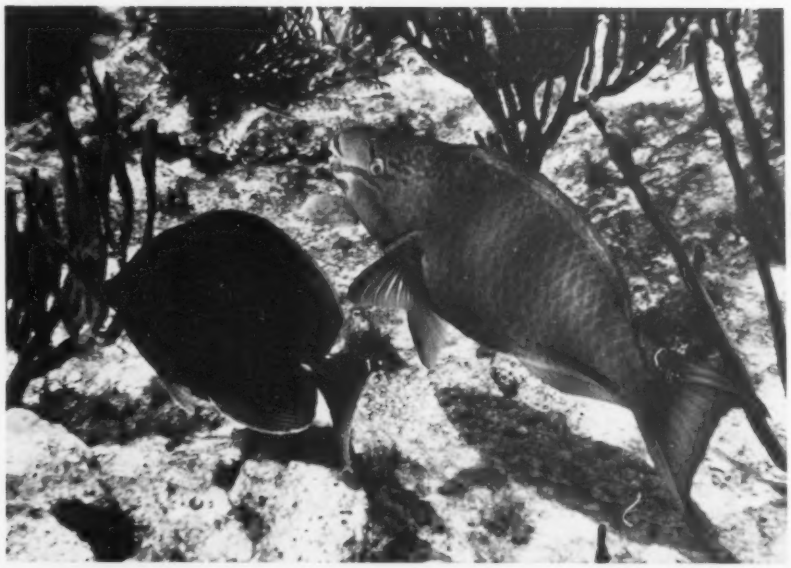
The submerged reefs make it difficult to navigate around the islands and more than 300 wrecks dot the waters surrounding Bermuda. In spite of this, several large lagoons have made Bermuda a well-known haven for boating.

Bermuda has been said to be a big, well-kept flower garden, on the land as well as under the water. ⚓

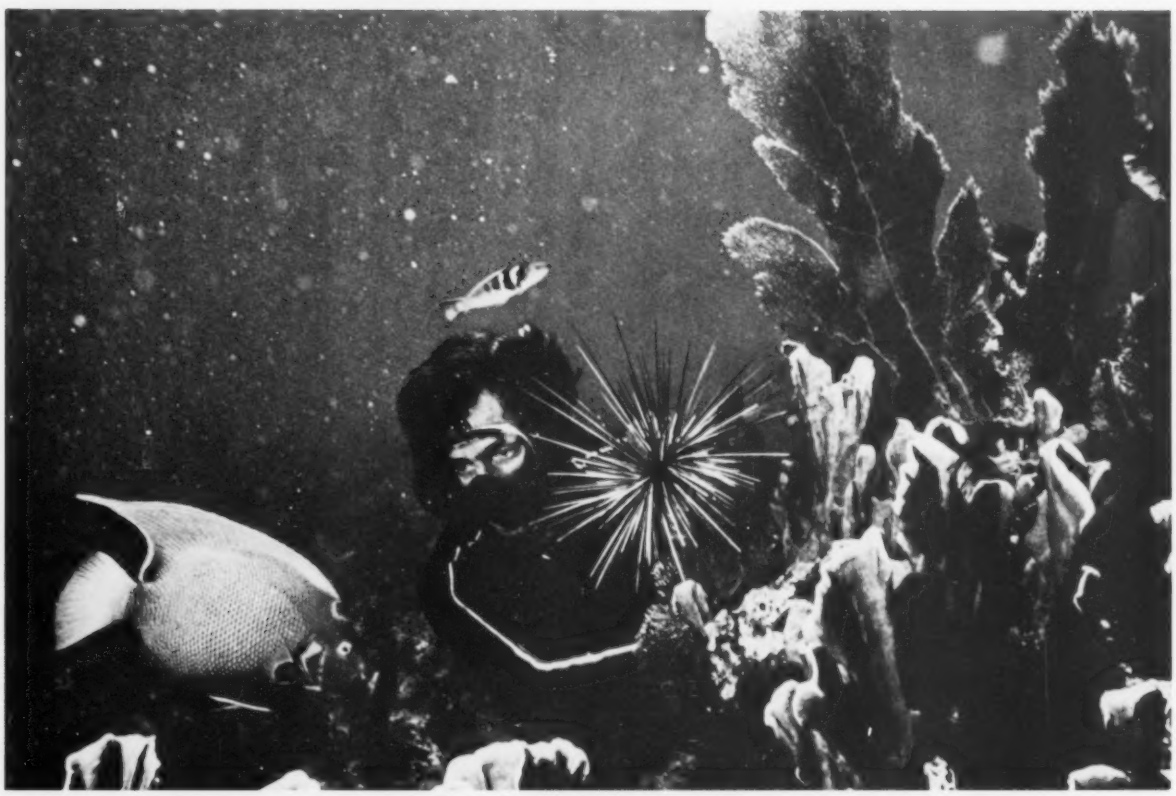
Diver Winkey Moss peers out of a porthole of a sunken merchant ship.

Soft coral waves with the water's motion.

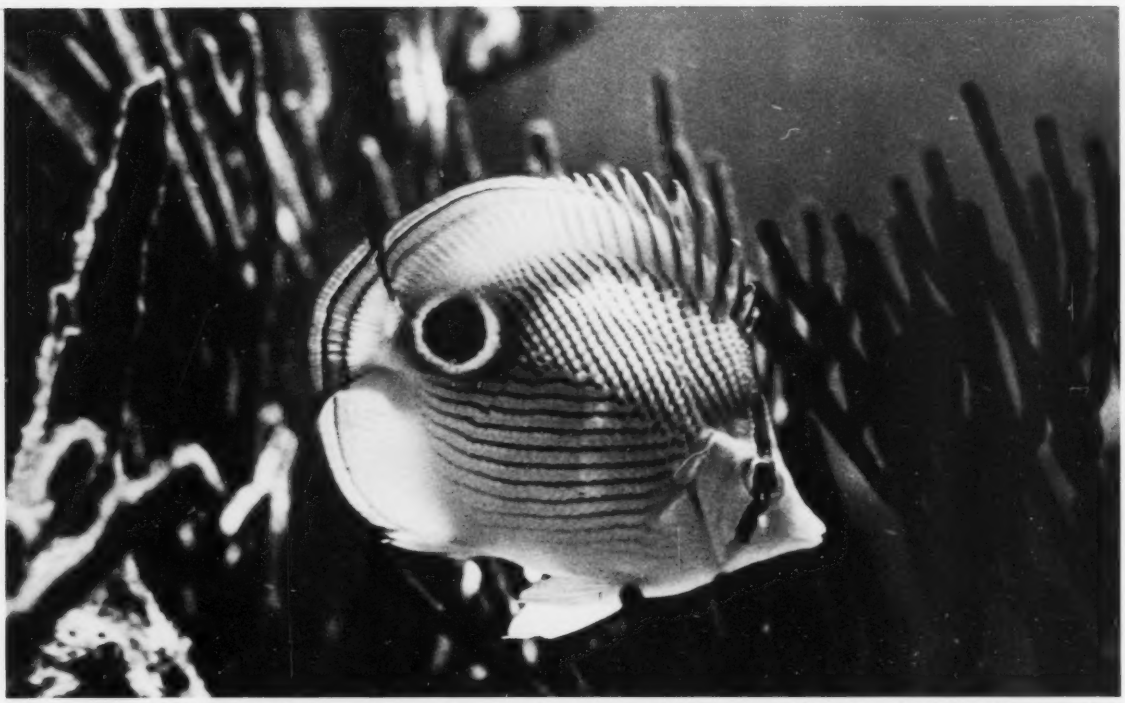
David Dickinson films branch-like coral.



A blue parrot fish (left) and a blue tang team up for a coral inspection.



Robert Kennedy moves in close for a look at a queen angel fish and a spiney sea urchin.



A four-eyed butterfly fish glides through a coral garden off Bermuda. Attractive but treacherous, the waters that surround the Bermudas are alive with sea life including coral heads and reefs that have claimed more than 300 vessels since the time Spanish treasure ships made their way home with Latin American gold. More photos on page 21.

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